



# State of the Union



## The Monthly Newsletter of Union Congregational Church

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Pastor: Rev. John C. Swanson Secretary: Martha Swanson

March 2017

*From the Pastor's Desk*

### LET THE LOWER LIGHTS BE BURNING

*Years ago, towards the end of my service as chaplain to the U.S. Coast Guard Boston Support Center, I made the acquaintance of BMI (Boatswain mate 1<sup>st</sup> class) Wesley Penent, light keeper of Boston Light. Wes had been kind enough to give me and my brother-in-law Steve and his daughter Ingrid a tour of the Light, the oldest, and last manned, lighthouse in America.*

*Established decades before Independence, in the 1720's, and by executive order of George Washington, the first federally funded expenditure of the new republic, Boston Light has, for almost three centuries, guided mariners safely through the treacherous islands and shoals that lie at the entrance of Boston Harbor.*

*Shortly after our visit, Wes paid us a visit at our church here in Wollaston. Greeting Wes, I asked Bob Troup, our organist, to play "Brightly Beams Our Father's Mercy" for the next hymn. To my disappointment Bob said, "Sorry, Pastor, I thought the same thing but that's a Methodist hymn and it's not in the hymnal."*

*What a shame. How often do you have an honest to goodness lighthouse keeper in church and we couldn't play one hymn that specifically talks about lighthouses. Here is verse one:*

*"Brightly beams our Father's mercy  
From his lighthouse evermore,  
But to us he gives the keeping  
Of the lights along the shore."*

*Wes may not have gotten his hymn that day but since 1895 this church has been a lighthouse, may it ever be so..*

*Till April, Pastor Jack*

*(Editor's note: BBFM is now in our supplemental hymnal).*



### SCRIPTURE

*"Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life." John 8:12*

## SERMON TITLES FOR MARCH

**Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**  
First Sunday of Lent

*“Let the Lower Lights Be Burning”*  
Text: Matthew 4:1-11  
*Dealing With Temptation*

**Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**  
Second Sunday of Lent

*“Hope Does Not Disappoint”*  
Text: Romans 5:1-11  
*Real Hope, Real Deliverance*

**Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup>**  
Third Sunday of Lent

*“Celtic Worship Service*  
Text: Genesis 1  
*Annual celebration of the Celtic Expression  
of the Faith*

**Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>**  
Fourth Sunday of Lent

*“Light and Darkness”*  
Text: Ephesians 5:8-14  
*Which One Do You Prefer?*

*For Lent I will be following the Common Lectionary. If there is one common theme in my sermons it is a reflection of the texts that call for REPENTANCE, DELIVERANCE AND FIDELITY. On March 19<sup>th</sup> we will once again celebrate the Celtic heritage of the faith with an eighth century Celtic Liturgy.*



*“When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:*

*“Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles—  
the people living in darkness  
have seen a great light;*

*on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.” From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’” Matthew 4:12-17*



## 11 HAPPENINGS AT UNION CHURCH

1. Cassie Swanson worked for Military Sealift Command during her semester break, inventorying supplies for reserve vessels in Virginia and New Orleans. This is her last semester at Massachusetts Maritime Academy.
2. Dylan White, MMA 16 engine, is sailing as a QMED (Qualified Member of the Engine Department) on a supply ship company in the Gulf of Mexico.
3. Pastor Jack is teaching Western Civilization at Massasoit Community College this spring, in addition to U.S. History I and II and American Government.
4. Alison Culkun is attending graduate school at Eastern Nazarene College, study early childhood education, and is substitute teaching in the Quincy system.
5. Stephanie Swanson Burgess and Nathan Smith are developing an online Christian movie review show.
6. Our Super Bowl Party on February 5<sup>th</sup> was super!
7. We had all sorts of great food, a warm fire in the hearth and VICTORY!
8. Pastor John Odams’ ceiling at First Baptist Church in Boston is higher than ours.
9. It is a lot higher in fact, with the height estimated at 120 feet to UCC’s 30 feet! The very beautiful sanctuary includes two stunning stained glass rose windows.
10. Lent began here with the annual Shrove Tuesday Supper on February 28<sup>th</sup>.
11. It continued with the Ash Wednesday Liturgy on Ash Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and will continue here at UCC with weekly Holy Communion.





**March Birthdays – Happy Birthday!**

- 2 – Mark Goodwin
- 9 – Sarah McKinney
- 10 – Peggy Ferris
- 17 – Pat Maguire
- 20 – Beth Goodwin
- 31 – Harry Marcel



**March Anniversaries – Happy Anniversary!**

*There are no March Anniversaries*



**CELTIC SERVICE AND IRISH TEA**

This wonderful annual event will be held on Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10:00 a.m. It includes an ancient Celtic liturgy for Holy Communion and is followed by an Irish Tea which includes Bangers (sausages), potatoes (hash browns), Irish bread, scones, and whatever other delicious goodies people might want to bring. We ask if everyone can plan to bring one of these items to share; there will be a sign-up sheet at Coffee Hour. Pastor Jack will assemble a cooking and set-up/clean-up teams so please speak to him if you would like to help out.



**MARK'S MOVIES**  
by Mark Goodwin

This month's movie is THE KARATE KID PART 2 starring Ralph Macchio, Pat Morita, and Danny Kamekona. This is a 1986 classic. In this sequel Daniel joins Mr. Miyagi as he travels to Okinawa to see his dying father. Mr. Miyagi also confronts his former best friend Sato who feels betrayed by him. After helping each other during a wild storm, Mr. Miyagi and Sato reconcile. However Daniel has no choice but to face Sato's Nephew in a fight which is not like a karate tournament. The fight is for real. This movie was a Family Drama.

**PRAYER CORNER – Please remember these folks in your prayers and please feel free to visit them or send them a card**

- Ruth Mathews**, 25 Cobb Street, Apartment L 232, Mansfield, MA 02048; 617-650-3487
- Rick Brady**, 28 Toms Way, Apt #209, Sandwich MA, 02563
- Otilie Scales**, Dwyer House, 25 Stonehaven Drive, Room #106, South Weymouth, MA 02190
- Barbara Fielding**, Southwood Nursing Center, 501 Cordwainer Drive, Norwell, MA 02061
- Betty Rideout**, Grove Manor Assisted Living, 160 Grove Street, Braintree, MA 02184

- \*Bay State Community Services, Quincy
- \*The Quincy Crisis Center, Quincy
- \*Interfaith Social Services, Quincy
- \*Friends of the Unborn, Quincy
- \*Boston Seafarer's Friend Society, Boston, Portsmouth, NH, Portland ME
- \*Pilgrim Church, Dorchester
- \*Christ Evangelical Church, South Shore
- \*Derek Chitwood and Rural Development Partners International, Kunming, China
- \*Eden Ministry, China
- \*Light of Christ Ministry, Kenya
- \*New Hope of the Plains, Kansas City MO
- \*Massasoit Community College
- \*For Our President and President Elect

**For All** Missionaries, Evangelists, Church Leaders and Workers and Others who seek to spread the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

**For Our Service Men and Women** Deployed Throughout the World

**For the Mentally Ill**, the Addicted, the Lost, the Homeless, the Unemployed or Under-Employed.

**For our nation and all nations & For Peace in the Middle East**

**For those whose lives** have been devastated by natural disasters, in locations around the world.

**For the persecuted Church** throughout the world

**And that we would all** put Christ first in our lives.



## MEN'S COLUMN

### *Going Out Into the Desert*

*Submitted by Martha Swanson in Honor of  
Lent*

Our blessed season of Lent is 40 days long because Jesus went into the desert or wilderness for 40 days to fast and pray then to be tempted by the devil. 3 times the devil tried to tempt Jesus and 3 times Jesus resoundingly defeated him. And, John the Baptist, the man sent by God to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, lived his life in the desert in prayer and fasting, preaching repentance and baptizing those who would come to him.

Over the centuries, many people have gone into the desert or wilderness to worship God, especially a large group of people who became known as the desert fathers and mothers, people who specifically left everything in the world behind to they could go out into the desert and worship and serve God and God alone. The most famous of these people was Saint Anthony.

Going out in the desert was and is so valuable in so many ways that, even if we have no desert to go to, it is important that we understand why going into the desert was so important, then emulate these people in life.

First people would go to the desert to seek out God, to eliminate all distractions and activities that might take them from Him, so He and He alone could be central in their lives.

Secondly, people would go to the desert so they could hear the voice of God speaking to them, free from all the noise and distractions of the world.

Thirdly, people would go to the desert to face themselves; their sinful selves, their temptations, their struggles, and to get to know who they really were.

Fourthly, people would go to the desert to face amazing hardships and triumph over them because of their absolute and total dependence on God.

Albeit on a much smaller scale, it would be so good spiritually for each and everyone of us to bring these principles into our own spiritual lives, and if we do we will be so much happier and more secure, and so much stronger and more loving as Christians. Find some time and a place to spend with God alone and put Him at the absolute center of your life. Find some quiet time and a desire to really listen to

God and what He may be saying to you. Be willing to really look at yourself, including your sins, your faults, and repent of them and then let the Lord grow and strengthen you. Then with great love and the power of the Holy Spirit, hold nothing back and really do your part to help others in this beautiful but really painful, noisy and confused world. Have a blessed Lent.



### **.BOOK REVIEW**

The Book Review Column  
Will Return Next Month



### **FRED MOUSE**

Hey everybody, how are you? Did I ever tell you about all my neices and nephews? I have a wonderfully big family and I am so proud of all of them! One of them is a violin player, which he plays with a toothpick since it is so small! One is a soccer player and they use a pea for a soccer ball. And one is a computer whiz on a computer the size of a postage stamp! I could talk all day about all of them but as usual I digress. What I really want to tell you about is two very special children in this church and two special events coming up soon! Victor and Gail Sanchez's son will be baptized on Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>. And organist Kristen McKinney's daughter Sarah will receive First Communion on April 2<sup>nd</sup>! These are such significant ceremonies in these children's lives and the lives of their families so I wanted to make sure everyone has the dates on their calendars! I love the slogan that appears on the newsletter's calendar each month, "At Union Church it is all about belonging, to Jesus Christ and to one another." I am so blessed to be part of this family, as we all are! Congratulations to the Sanchez and McKinney families! With love, until April, Fred Mouse



**EVENTS AT UNION  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH!**

**Worship at 10:00 a.m. with  
Coffee Hour Afterward**

**Sunday School During  
Worship**

**The Joy Club Senior  
Program Thursdays at 1:00  
p.m.**

**Prayer Group  
Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.**

***SPECIAL PROGRAMS  
THIS MONTH!***

***Ash Wednesday Worship  
Service***

*Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>  
7:30 p.m.*

***Monthly Spaghetti Supper***  
*Saturday March 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00  
p.m.*

*\$5 per person*

***Celtic Service and Irish Tea***  
*Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00  
a.m.*

**A.A. Groups Every  
Monday, Friday and  
Saturday at 6:30 p.m.**

**Hancock Park Worship  
Service on the Second  
Sunday at 12:15 p.m.**

Union Congregational Church  
136 Rawson Road  
Wollaston, MA 02170



**In God We Trust**



# March 2017

Jesus if Lord!  
Praise His Name!  
Have a blessed Lent.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>At Union Church It's All About Belonging - To Jesus Christ and to One Another</i>			<b>1</b> 7:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship Service	<b>2</b> 1:00 p.m. Joy Club	<b>3</b> 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>4</b> 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting
<b>5</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship/Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	<b>6</b> 12:15 p.m. Clay Street Bible Study 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>7</b> 1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 1:00 p.m. Joy Club	<b>10</b> 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>11</b> 6:00 p.m. Spaghetti Supper 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting
<b>12</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship/Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	<b>13</b> 12:15 p.m. Clay Street Bible Study 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>14</b> 1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship	<b>15</b> 7:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting	<b>16</b> 1:00 p.m. Joy Club	<b>17</b> 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>18</b> 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting
<b>19</b> 10:00 a.m. Celtic Worship Service 11:00 a.m. Irish Tea	<b>20</b> 12:15 p.m. Clay Street Bible Study 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>21</b> 1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 1:00 p.m. Joy Club	<b>24</b> 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>25</b> 6:00 p.m. AA Meeting
<b>26</b> 10:00 a.m. Worship/Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	<b>27</b> 12:15 p.m. Clay Street Bible Study 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	<b>28</b> 1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 1:00 p.m. Joy Club	<b>31</b> 6:30 p.m. AA Meeting	



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